

POLICY 10

Name of organisation:

Safe use of Changing Facilities Policy

Commitment to Te Tiriti O Waitangi

(insert name of organisation) recognises Te Tiriti o Waitangi as Aotearoa New Zealand's founding document.

(insert name of organisation) committed to upholding the mana of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the principles of Partnership, Protection and Participation.

Background

All children must be safe in changing facilities where they may be particularly vulnerable to bullying and abuse. Responsible adults will keep children safe and respect appropriate boundaries.

Thinking about how you can effectively meet the needs of all children and young people is important. It's important to consider the facilities that are available, who can access them and whether the environment is safe for children and young people.

We know that children and young people are particularly vulnerable in changing areas. Due in part to various stages of dress/undress and because they are often less supervised than at other times.

There is a risk of child-to-child problems, such as bullying if the changing room is left unsupervised.

The following procedures can help to reduce the risk of misconduct or abuse in changing facilities:

1. Changing facilities should not be used by adults and children/young people at the same time. Where this is unavoidable, there must be access to separate changing, showering and toilet areas.
2. Under no circumstances should adults be undressed in front of children/young people in changing rooms.
3. Staff and volunteers must not change or shower at the same time as children using the same facilities.
4. For mixed-gender activities, separate facilities must be available for boys and girls.
5. If a child or young person feels uncomfortable changing or showering in public, then no pressure should be placed on them to do so.
6. If disabled children and young people need to use changing facilities, make sure they are accessible and that the disabled child or young person and their parent, caregiver or whānau are involved in deciding if and how they should be assisted. Make sure the child or young person is able to consent to the assistance that is offered.
7. The use of mobile phones and/or photographic equipment with video recording capabilities by staff and volunteers and also children and young people themselves should be prohibited under any circumstance in changing facilities.
8. Where no changing facilities are available, children/young people and their parents, caregivers or whānau should be made aware of this prior to the activity taking place.
9. Parents, caregivers or whānau should be discouraged from entering changing facilities unless it is truly necessary. In such circumstances, only a parent of the same sex as the children/young people may enter the changing facility and they should let the supervising adult know about this in advance. At least one member of staff/volunteer of the same sex as the children/young people involved should be present with the parent, caregiver or whānau when other children/young people are in the changing facility.
10. Staff and volunteers, especially those of the opposite sex, should not be in the changing facility when children are undressed.



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